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SUBJECT: SOUTHEAST TURKEY PRESS SUMMARY,
APRIL 23, 2003

1. This is the Southeastern Turkey press summary for April 23, 2003. Please note that Turkish press reports often contain errors or exaggerations; AmConsulate Adana does not vouch for the accuracy of the reports summarized here.

POLITICAL, SECURITY, HUMAN RIGHTS

2. Milliyet: Ankara is undertaking a major legal arrangement to bring PKK militants down from the mountains because it is not being satisfied with the results of the "repent law" for dissolving the PKK. The expanded legal arrangements, which aim to contribute to social reconciliation, have been made in light of the evaluations at the summit of the state to eradicate the terrorist components and their arms. The projects has also been evaluated at the National Security Council, and it is assessed that such an arrangement will become more effective to enhance the national security because of the likely political atmosphere and structure taking place in postwar Iraq. Ending the chaotic situation and filling the vacuum of authority in the region will also encourage the PKK/KADEK militants to benefit from the new repent law. Officials said that previous repent laws were unfruitful, and the desired results were not attained from them despite distribution of thousands of handouts by helicopters to the militants in the mountains. The current repent law would give short-term light sentences followed by pardoning the militants.

3. Hurriyet: Turkey sought an amicable solution to four arson and mysterious killing cases handled at the European Court of Human Rights yesterday. Accepting the crimes and the shortcomings in the legal investigations, Turkey agreed to pay 224,500 Euros in indemnities to the victims of the four cases. Huseyin Ates, whose house was set on fire in 1994 will be paid 49,000 Euros; Zeki Yildiz, who was attacked by wardens in Buca prison of Izmir, 30,500 Euros; Beyaz Macir, whose husband was killed by the security forces, 70,000 Euros; and Zahide Guler, whose husband was killed by the security forces in Mus, 75,000 Euros.

4. Evrensel: Diyarbakir HRA Chapter's 2002 report on land mines revealed that 9 persons were killed due to land mine explosions in 2002. The report said 24 persons were killed and 45 others were wounded in 24 incidents due to the exploding of rockets, mortars, land mines, and hand grenades. The article provides specific information relating to HRA's account regarding the five explosions that took place in Sirnak province affecting fifteen people. The report also announced that three more persons had lost their lives while many others were wounded in land mine explosions in Hakkari, Mardin, Van, and Siirt provinces.

5. Evrensel: Workers and the Sanliurfa Municipality signed a two-year collective agreement covering 1227 municipal workers. According to the agreement, the workers will be given a 13 percent increase for the first and second six months, and 14 percent for the third and fourth six months of the contract. The fringe benefits were equally raised. An additional average amount of USD 75 will be given to sanitation workers under the name of compensation for constantly being exposed to bad odor. With the latest salary adjustments, the minimum monthly wage for a municipal worker will be USD 160 while the maximum wage will be USD 500.

16. **Turkiye/Bolge:** Based on a tip, jandarma teams seized four thousand roots of hemp in a green house of tomatoes in Kavakli village of Ceyhan (Adana). Four owners of the green houses were arrested in connection with hemp. Officials said an investigation is underway.

17. **Turkiye:** Jandarma teams patrolling Soguksu village, close to the Iranian border, arrested 22 Afghan and Pakistani nationals who had illegally passed into Turkey. In addition, 2 unidentified Turks, allegedly helping and harboring them, were also arrested. They will be arraigned after the completion of their interrogation by security officers.

18. **Cumhuriyet/Milliyet:** Foreign Ministry spokesman Huseyin Dirioz disclosed that the UN's World Food Program (WFP) announced that they purchased 101 tons of foodstuffs needed in Iraq from Turkey. Dirioz stated that the foodstuffs amounted to USD 40 million, and about 100 trucks per day would carry the material from Habur border gate to Iraq. Dirioz added that WFP wanted to buy a quantity of 400 to 500 thousand tons of foodstuff from Turkey, valued at USD 200 million. Radikal gives the inventory of the food items that have been or will be purchased by WFP as follows: 13 thousand tons of flour purchased from Turkey was carried by 442 trucks to Erbil and Sulaymania; USD 1.5 million worth of assorted medical and educational material was dispatched to Iraq following the same route; WFP purchased about 43 thousand tons of flour and sugar from Turkey while the amount of legumes, vegetable oil, and high energy content biscuits reached 80 thousand tons. The UN brought about 20 thousand tons of humanitarian relief items to Iskenderun port which were then forwarded to Iraq.

19. **Radikal:** Lawyers and Human Rights Advocates attending the hearing of a 14-year-old girl in Kiziltepe of Mardin were attacked by the relatives of the 30 inmates charged with rape as their request for being released from prison was refused by the court during the session closed to press and audiences. The lawyers and HR advocates were stranded for 1.5 hours in the courthouse due to the conduct of the inmates' relatives. The lawyers demanded the case be transferred to another town for security considerations.

ECONOMIC AND AGRICULTURAL DEVELOPMENTS

110. **Milliyet:** Mersin Chamber of Commerce and Industry affiliate Development Agency Project Coordination Center announced that 18 Israeli companies had applied to their center in order to attend the May 25-26 meeting sponsored by them. The Israeli companies are mainly consulting firms on greenhouse technologies, irrigation, fertilizers, livestock raising, packaging, food technologies, biological control, cultures without soil, packing materials, and agricultural technologies in Israel.
HOLTZ